

“Enabling the Vision”

Part 4

Biblical Benefits of Lifestyle Giving

“This is what the Lord Almighty says: ‘These people say, ‘The time has not yet come for the Lord’s house to be built.’ Then the word of the Lord came through the prophet Haggai: ‘Is it a time for you yourselves to be living in your paneled houses, while this house remains a ruin?’ Now this is what the Lord Almighty says: ‘Give careful thought to your ways. You have planted much, but have harvested little. You eat, but never have enough. You drink, but never have your fill. You put on clothes, but are not warm. You earn wages, only to put them in a purse with holes in it.’ This is what the Lord Almighty says: ‘Give careful thought to your ways. Go up into the mountains and bring down timber and build the house, so that I may take pleasure in it and be honored,’ says the Lord. ‘You expected much, but see, it turned out to be little. What you brought home, I blew away. Why?’ declares the Lord Almighty. ‘Because of my house, which remains a ruin, while each of you is busy with his own house.’”

Haggai 1:2-9 (NIV)

Why should I be a tither (giving 10%) and a giver?

1. To be obedient

“...Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and obey it.”

Luke 11:28 (NIV)

“Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock.”

Matthew 7:24-25

2. Draws me closer to God and Godliness

“Wherever your treasure is, there your heart and thoughts will also be.”

Matthew 6:21 (NLT)

“Be imitators of God,...just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us...”

Ephesians 5:1 (NIV)

3. Slays the dragon of materialism

“...Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; a man’s life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions. And he told them this parable: ‘The ground of a certain rich man produced a good crop. He thought to himself, ‘What shall I do? I have no place to store my crops.’ Then he said, ‘This is what I’ll do. I will tear down my barns

and build bigger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I'll say to myself, 'You have plenty of good things laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry.' But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?' This is how it will be with anyone who stores up things for himself but is not rich toward God."

Luke 12:15-21 (NIV)

4. Strengthens my faith

"Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse,...Test me in this, says the Lord Almighty, 'and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it.'"

Malachi 3:10 (NIV)

5. Helps me focus on the eternal not temporal

"Tell them to use their money to do good. They should be rich in good works and should give happily to those in need, always being ready to share with others whatever God has given them. By doing this they will be storing up real treasure for themselves in heaven-it is the only safe investment for eternity! And they will be living a fruitful Christian life down here as well."

1 Timothy 6:18-19 (TLB)

"Don't store up treasures here on earth where they can erode away or may be stolen. Store them in heaven where they will never lose their value and are safe from thieves. If your profits are in heaven, your heart will be there too."

Matthew 6:19-21 (TLB)

6. Gets' God's attention

"And He sat down opposite the treasury, and began observing how the multitude were putting money into the treasury; and many rich people were putting in large sums. And a poor widow came and put in two small copper coins, which amount to a cent. And calling His disciples to Him, He said to them, 'Truly I say to you, this poor widow put in more than all the contributors to the treasury; for they all put in out of their surplus, but she, out of her poverty, put in all she owned, all she had to live on.'"

Mark 12:41-44 (NAS)

7. A key test on how much you can be trusted with spiritual things

"And if you are untrustworthy about worldly wealth, who will trust you with the true riches of heaven?"

Luke 16:11-12 (NLT)

8. It blesses me in return

“Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you.”

Luke 6:38

How to Get the Most Out of Giving

Give...

Willingly, Thankfully, Joyfully, Expectantly

“Remember this--a farmer who plants only a few seeds will get a small crop. But the one who plants generously will get a generous crop. You must each make up your own mind as to how much you should give. Don’t give reluctantly or in response to pressure. For God loves the person who gives cheerfully. And God will generously provide all you need. Then you will always have everything you need and plenty left over to share with others.”

2 Corinthians 9:6-8 (NLT)